

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 008623
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 008623

NODIS

FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT JIDDA 0252 ACTION SECSTATE JAN 12

QUOTES E C R E T JIDDA 0252

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:MASS, SA

SUBJECT: SALE OF F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. CODEL DELEGATION HEADED BY SENATOR WILLIAMS AND INCLUDING SENATORS STEVENS, RIBICOFF, CANNON AND HOLLINGS LEFT JANUARY 9 AFTER A MOST SUCCESSFUL VISIT HERE. THE VISIT WAS CLIMAXED BY TWO-HOUR MEETING WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD ON JANUARY 8. (SEE SEPARATE TELS.) FINAL ITEM DISCUSSED WITH FAHD WAS F-15 SALE. CROWN PRINCE MAPE SUPERB AGRUMENT. WHEN HE FINISHED, SENATOR RIBICOFF STATED, "YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, YOU HAVE WON YOUR CASE". ALL PRESENT TOOK THIS AS A SECRET

SECRET

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COMMITMENT OF RIBICOFF TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF F-15 SALES. UPON LEAVING MEETING, RIBICOFF COMPLAINED OF VIOLENT HEADACHE AND SKIPPED REST OF FESTIVITIES. OTHER SENATORS, ESPECIALLY HOLLINGS, CONSIDERED STATEMENT A FIRM COMMITMENT.

2. ASSESSMENT OF SENATORS, IN WHICH I FULLY CONCUR, IS THAT SUPPORT OF RIBICOFF FOR F-15 SALE MAY WELL BE DECIDING

FACTOR AND ELIMINATE A LOT OF QUESTIONS AND GRIEF WHEN
PRESIDENT SUBMITS PROPOSAL.

3. TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS BREAKTHROUGH, RESPECTFULLY
SUGGEST THAT UPON RIBICOFF'S RETURN, YOU, THE PRESIDENT
OR BRZEZINSKI MAKE SPECIAL EFFORT TO CONTACT RIBICOFF
GETTING A REPORT ON HIS VERSION OF THE TRIP AND IF POSSIBLE
GETTING REAFFIRMATION OF HIS F-15 SUPPORT COMMITMENT.
IF HE APPEARS TO BE WAVERING, SUGGEST CONSULTATION
WITH SENATOR HOLLINGS ON HOW BEST TO APPROACH HIM.

4. SENATOR CANNON WAS PREVENTED BY SLIGHT ILLNESS FROM
ATTENDING MOST FUNCTIONS BUT ALL OTHERS, INCLUDING
RIBICOFF, STATED THAT THEY LEFT WITH NEW APPRECIATION OF
SAUDI POSITION AND NEW UNDERSTANDING OF NEEDS OF COUNTRY.
WEST. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

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